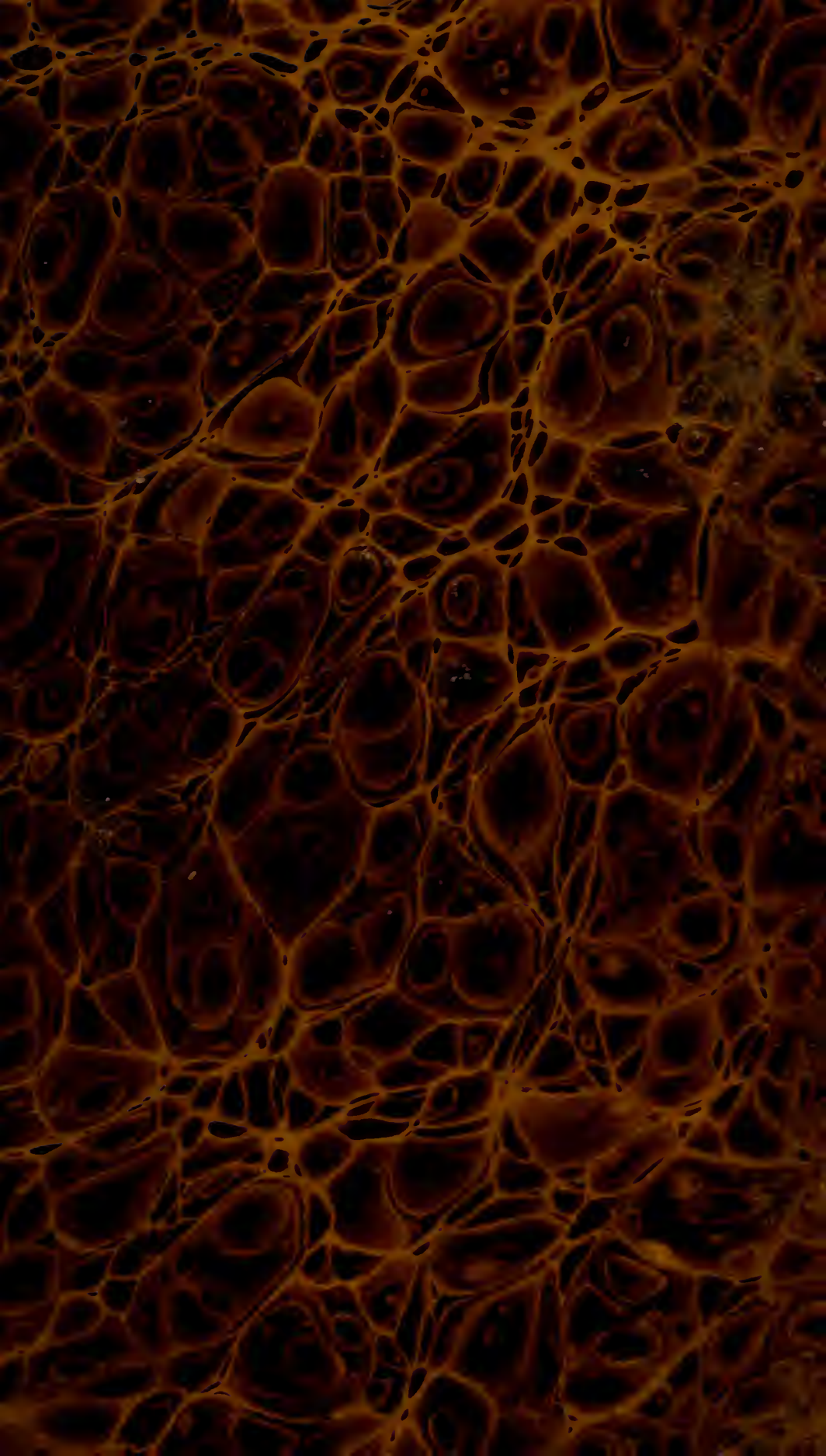
QUAKER
BX
7617
.P5
A3
1838

MAGILL LIBRARY
HAVERFORD
COLLEGE



Nelly Fisher Wharton

from

her affectionate

Father

Wm. Wharton

9 mo. 6th

1838

1792

CHRISTIAN ADVICES:

PUBLISHED BY THE

YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,

HELD

IN PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA:
E. L. CAREY & A. HART.
1838.

Quaker
BX7617
.P5
A3
1838

J. Richards, Printer.

NOTE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

It has been thought right by a few individuals, members of the Society of Friends, to republish this little volume, the first edition of which is now nearly exhausted.

The convulsion through which our religious society has passed, has awakened a spirit of inquiry not only within our own borders, but among other professing Christians.

Our worthy forefathers declared their belief in the efficacy and sufficiency of a Divine principle, which William Penn denominated "The light of Christ within, as God's gift for man's salvation"—and it is cause of deep regret that some who bear the name of Quakers, should have so far deviated from this simple faith, as to insist on a dependance upon outward things and external observances, which have been devised in the will and wisdom of man.

And when it is recollected that the "Christian Advices" were issued under the sanction of the Yearly Meeting of 1808, before the appearance of that desolating spirit which led to a separation, it seems peculiarly proper that another edition should be published.

In this little volume, the principles and testimonies of the people called Quakers, are exhibited within a small compass, and we would affectionately commend it to the perusal of all who are desirous of becoming acquainted with them.

We trust also it may prove useful in our own Society, and have a tendency to call us to an examination of original principles, encourage and strengthen us to "reject the commandments of men," and "to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."

Philadelphia, Eighth Month, 1838.

INTRODUCTION.

The following extracts have been compiled for the benefit of the members of our Yearly Meeting, that observing the travail of the Church under various concerns, which in divine wisdom have been communicated for its weighty attention, they may be drawn to the principle of Life and Light manifested in the mind, which points out the path of duty and can alone preserve therein.

Our ancient Friends and their faithful successors to the present day, have earnestly laboured to turn the attention of all to this pure Spirit; knowing from experience, that it is the means appointed by God for effecting our salvation, and the only foundation of all true religion and worship. As by this we have been led into divers testimonies which have distinguished us from most other professors of the christian name, we fervently desire that all our members may walk by the same rule and mind the same thing; thus every one filling his place in the body, we shall grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ.

Meeting for Sufferings, Philadelphia,
12th mo. 16*th*, 1808.

CONTENTS.

Books, - - - - - - 9
Burials, - - - - - 10
Charity and Unity, - - - - 12
Civil Government, - - - - 15
Conduct and Conversation, - - - 17
Days and Times, - - - - 26
Defamation and Detraction, - - - 35
Discipline, - - - - - 37
Gaming and Diversions, - - - - 42
Marriage, - - - - - 44
Meetings for Worship, - - - - 51
Moderation and Temperance, - - 55
Negroes or Slaves, - - - - 58
Oaths, - - - - - 60
Parents and Children, - - - - 62
Plainness, - - - - - 69
Poor, - - - - - - 75
Removals, - - - - - 80
Schools, - - - - - - 81
Scriptures, - - - - - 85
Sufferings, - - - - - 87
Trade, - - - - - 88
War, - - - - - - 96
Wills. - - - - - 99

BOOKS.

This meeting doth earnestly exhort all parents, heads of families, and guardians of minors, that they prevent as much as in them lies, their children and others under their care and tuition, from having or reading books and papers tending to prejudice the profession of the christian religion, lest their infant and feeble minds should be poisoned thereby, and a foundation laid for the greatest evils.

And it is earnestly recommended to every member of our religious society, that they avoid and discourage the reading of plays, romances, novels, and other pernicious books, which evidently tend to strengthen the corrupt propensities of nature, to give the mind false ideas of pleasure and happiness, and to disincline it to virtuous and praiseworthy pursuits.

BURIALS.

As those who attend Burials may sometimes come from far and be in need of bodily refreshment, it is earnestly advised that when this is really necessary, it may be taken in moderation; and that Friends be careful to demean themselves with gravity and decency; remembering that such seasons especially ought never to be perverted into opportunities for intemperance or levity. And it is desired that when any thing unseemly appears, the offenders may be taken aside and tenderly admonished, that so every thing tending to lessen the solemnity of such occasions may be avoided.

Advised, that Friends be careful themselves and discourage their children from attending the worship of those not in communion with us, and particularly at burials:

seeing that in so doing there is a danger either of balking their testimony for the truth and wounding their own minds, or giving unnecessary offence to their sober neighbours.

Friends are advised against imitating the vain custom of wearing or giving mourning habits, and against affixing any monuments of wood or stone to graves, and all extravagant expenses about the interment of the dead.

And it is recommended that at all our interments time be allowed for a solemn pause both before and after the corpse is put into the ground.

CHARITY AND UNITY.

Among the gospel precepts, we find not any thing more strongly and frequently recommended by our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles to the primitive believers, than that they should love one another; and as we are sensible that nothing will more contribute to the peace and prosperity of the Church than a due regard to this advice, so we earnestly desire that it may be the care and concern of all Friends to dwell therein, and in the unity of the Holy Spirit to maintain love, concord and peace, in and among all the churches of Christ.

Love and unity being the special badge of discipleship by which the real followers of Christ are ever to be distinguished, we tenderly desire that it may be always preserved among us, and that every thing which tends

to rob us of it be carefully shunned; for without it, however earnest our zeal for the cause of truth in other respects may appear, formality will take place of the substance, and the life and power of true religion be withdrawn. Let every one therefore watch over his own heart, and often examine whether he therein finds love to God and to the brethren his motive to action on all occasions, but more especially when we meet together for divine worship and the support of the discipline.

Let a spirit of love and humility more and more diffuse itself among us, and influence the hearts of all; thus every one will be engaged to seek peace, and none be apt to take offence; but each in his own particular be more careful to rectify his own failings and imperfections than curious in observing, censuring, and aggravating those of others.

Dear Friends, seek peace and pursue it. Ye are called to love. O that the smallest germ of enmity might be eradicated from our inclosure! And verily there is a soil in

which it cannot live, but naturally withers and dies. This soil is christian humility: a state highly becoming and indispensable for a being who depends continually on the favours of his Lord; a state in which of all others he can most acceptably approach his presence; and a state which naturally conducts frail man to love and compassion for the companions of his frailty and poverty, yet his fellow partakers of the offered riches of the gospel

CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

A fervent concern prevailing for the preservation of our members in a faithful maintenance of our religious testimonies, it is desired that all may be drawn to deep inward watchfulness against every presentation either for acquiring gain by trade and commerce dependent on war, or the attainment of worldly honor in accepting of posts or offices in civil government, which often expose to the violation of divers testimonies, particularly that respecting oaths.

It is earnestly desired and recommended that the members of our religious society may maintain an inoffensive, circumspect demeanour towards all men, manifesting in their lives and conversation a subjection to the peaceable spirit of Christ, which will preserve from giving just occasion of offence to any, and from being betrayed into those

heats and controversies which frequently prevail respecting the policies and governments of this world: for as we are called to show forth in life and practice our belief that the peaceful reign of the Messiah is begun in the earth and will advance to its designed completion, when according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more,"—we cannot be concerned in any combinations of a hostile nature, nor oppose those under whose outward government we are providentially placed; nor can we unite with or encourage such as revile or asperse them: but remembering that the Lord ruleth over the kingdoms of men, we should patiently resign to the dispensations of his wisdom and power, and seek to be endued with the spirit of prayer and supplication for all men, that we may be permitted to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. "For this (as said the apostle) is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."

CONDUCT AND CONVERSATION.

It is desired that Friends may be guarded in their conduct at all times and on all occasions, that no stumbling block be laid in the way of honest inquirers after truth, nor offence given to tender minds under convincement. "Let your light (said Christ) so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Our moderation and prudence, as well as truth and justice, should appear in trading and commerce, in speech and communication, in eating and drinking, in habit and furniture, and in all things; that, as we profess to be a spiritually-minded people, we may manifest by a meek and quiet spirit, that we are bounded by the cross of Christ, and concerned to show forth the excellency of that divine principle, by a conversation every way agreeable thereunto.

Let your words be few and savoury, observing the precept of the apostle, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." So may your good example, and the gravity and circumspection of your conduct and behaviour, minister just rebuke to those who know not a bridle to their tongue, and who seem not sufficiently aware, "that in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin."

It is worthy of general remembrance, that no affectation of singularity was the cause of a demeanour both civil and religious in our forefathers, (or in the faithful of this day) different in many respects from the conduct of those among whom we dwell; but they beholding the vanity, unprofitableness, and insincerity of the salutations, customs, and fashions of the world, and regarding the examples of our blessed Saviour and his followers, with the frequent testimonies recorded in holy writ, to the necessity of a self-denying life and conversation, together with the law and testimony revealed in their hearts,

retained in view the injunction of the apostle, Not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of the mind, that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. May an uprightness of heart as in the sight of God, ever attend this simplicity of appearance, that none by a conduct inconsistent therewith, may furnish occasion for the testimony to be evilly spoken of or despised.

God who is the Creator of man, and he to whom he oweth the dedication both of soul and body, is over all to be worshipped and adored, and that not only by the spirit, but also with the prostration of the body. Now kneeling, bowing and uncovering the head, is the alone outward signification of our adoration towards God, and therefore, it is not lawful to give it unto man. He that kneeleth or prostrates himself to man, what doth he more to God? He that boweth and uncovereth his head to the creature, what hath he reserved to the Creator? Since therefore all the duties of the different relations under

which we may be situated, may be performed one to another without those kind of bowings, they are therefore no essential part of our duty to man, but to God.

The world in its degeneracy from God, is as much out of the way as to true honor and respect, as in other things; much of which are, as the apostle speaks of science—They are honors and respects falsely so called; having nothing of the nature of true honor and respect in them: but as degenerate men, loving to be honored, first devised them, so pride only loves and seeks them.

Some of the reasons which have engaged us to decline the practice of the present customs of pulling off the hat, bowing the body or knee, and giving people gaudy titles and epithets in our salutations and addresses, are, that savour, sight and sense that God by his light and spirit has given us of the world's apostacy from him, and the cause and effects of that great and lamentable defection; in the discovery of which, the sense of our own state came first before us, and we were made

to see him whom we had pierced, and to mourn for it. Now every word, thought and deed, was brought to judgment, the root examined, and its tendency considered; and by knowing the evil leaven and its evil effects in ourselves, we came to have a sense and knowledge of the states of others; the present honors and respects of the world became burdensome to us; we saw they had no being in paradise, that they grew in the night time and came from an evil root; that they only delighted a vain and ill mind, and that much pride and folly was in them. We honor those that are placed in authority over us; our parents, our masters, our magistrates, our landlords, one another; yea all men after God's way used by holy men and women of old time: but we cannot esteem bows, titles, and pulling off of hats to each other, to be real honors, because such like customs have been prohibited by God, his Son and servants in days past. Christ said to the Jews, How can ye believe that receive honor one of another and seek not the honor that

cometh from God only; and charged his disciples, be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your master even Christ, and all ye are brethren. Neither be ye called master, but he that is greatest among you, shall be your servant, and whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased. These passages carry a severe rebuke both to worldly honor in general, and to those members and expressions of it in particular, which as near as the language of scripture and customs of that age will permit, do distinctly reach and allude to those of our own time.

Our non-conformity to the world in using the word *thou* for *you*, when addressing an individual, hath the same original as the foregoing. Words of themselves are but as so many marks set and employed for necessary and intelligible mediums whereby men may understandingly express their minds and conceptions to each other: though the world be divided into many nations, each of which for the most part has its peculiar language or dialect, yet they have ever concurred in the

same numbers and persons, as forming much of the ground of right speech. *Thou* and *thee* when speaking to one, and *ye* and *you* to more than one, is according to plain grammar rule, and it would be impossible to preserve numbers if *you* be used to express one. But it is a most extravagant piece of pride in a mortal man to require or expect from his fellow creature a more grateful language than he is wont to give to the immortal God his Creator, in all his worship to him. Since we are persuaded that its original was from pride and flattery we cannot use it.

And however we may be censured as singular, by those loose and airy minds, that consider not the true rise and tendency of words and things, yet to us whom God has convinced by his light and spirit in our hearts, of the folly and evil of such courses, and brought into a spiritual discerning of the nature and ground of the world's fashions, they appear to be the fruits of pride and flattery; and we dare not continue in such vain compliances to earthly minds lest we offend

God and burden our own consciences, knowing assuredly that for every idle word that men speak, they shall give an account in the day of judgment.

Frequent waiting in stillness on the Lord for renewal of strength, keeps the mind at home in its proper place and duty, and out of all unprofitable conversation and converse, whether amongst those of our own or other professions.

Much hurt may accrue to the religious mind by long and frequent conversation on temporal matters, especially by interesting ourselves unnecessarily in them; for there is a leaven in that propensity, which, being suffered to prevail, indisposes and benumbs the soul, and prevents its frequent ascendings in living aspirations towards the Fountain of eternal life.

Whatever exercises we may meet with on account of a faithful testimony to the truth in all godliness of conversation, and to the end that we may not faint in our minds, let us consider the Captain of our salvation, who

endured the contradiction of sinners, bearing his cross and despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of God, where he continually maketh intercession for us: that following him, and under his banner fighting the good fight of faith, we may finally obtain the crown of righteousness which fadeth not away.

DAYS AND TIMES.

ADVISED, that Friends be exemplary in keeping to our ancient testimony against the superstitious observation of days; and to the simplicity of truth in calling the days and months by scripture names and not by those of the heathen.

The children of Israel, the people whom God chose out of all the families of the earth to place his name among, and to make himself known unto, were strictly commanded not only to abstain from the idolatrous practices of the nations in the midst of whom they dwelt, but were enjoined to be "circumspect in all things that the Lord commanded," and even to "make no mention of the names of other gods, neither to let it be heard out of their mouth." This injunction was a perpetual command and standing ordi-

nance in honor of the One Almighty Being, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and as such ought to be regarded by us, and by all the generations of those, who with the heart believe, as well as with the tongue confess, "that the Lord he is God, and that there is none else besides him;" who hath declared, "I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Convinced of this everlasting truth, both by the testimony of the scriptures and the manifestation of the divine principle which leads those who are faithful to its teachings from every thing either in word or deed that would dishonor the truth, our ancient Friends were conscientiously concerned to refrain from the use of those names of months and days, which the heathens had given to the idols they worshipped; and this concern rested upon them from a firm persuasion that the glorious gospel day was come, wherein the Lord was fulfilling his covenant with Israel, viz. I will take away the names

of Baalim out of his mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name. Consistently with this testimony the following account of the origin of the names of some of the months of the year, and of all the days of the week as now commonly used, is recommended to the serious consideration of our members.

1. January was so called from Janus, an ancient king of Italy, whom heathenish superstition had deified, to whom a temple was built, and this month dedicated.

2. February was so called from Februa, a word denoting purgation by sacrifices; it being usual in this month for the priests of the heathen god, Pan, to offer sacrifices and perform certain rites, conducing, as was supposed, to the cleansing or purgation of the people.

3. March was so denominated from Mars, feigned to be the god of war, whom Romulus, founder of the Roman empire, pretended to be his father.

4. April is generally supposed to derive

its name from the Greek appellation of Venus, an imaginary goddess worshipped by the Romans.

5. May is said to have been so called from Maia, the mother of Mercury, another of their pretended ethnic deities, to whom in this month they paid their devotions.

6. June is said to take its name from Juno, one of the supposed goddesses of the heathen.

7. July so called from Julius Cæsar, one of the Roman emperors, who gave his name to this month, which before was called Quintilis, or the fifth.

8. August so named in honour of Augustus Cæsar, another of the Roman emperors.—This month was before called Sextilis, or the sixth.*

The other four months, namely, September, October, November, and December, still retain their numerical Latin names, which, according to the late regulation of the calendar, will for the future be improperly applied. However, from the continued use of them

* Macrob. Saturn. lib. 1. cap. 12.

hitherto, as well as from the practice of the Jews before the Babylonish captivity,* it seemeth highly probable, that the method of distinguishing the months by their numerical order only, was the most ancient, as it is the most plain, simple and rational.

As the idolatrous Romans thus gave names to several of the months in honour of their pretended deities, so the like idolatry of our Saxon ancestors, induced them to call each day of the week by the name of the idol which on that day they peculiarly worshipped. Hence,

The first day of the week they called Sunday, from their customary adoration of the sun on that day.

The second day of the week they called Monday, from their worshipping the moon on that day.

The third day of the week they called Tuesday, in honour of one of their idols, called Tuisco.

The fourth day of the week was called

* See the Scriptures to the time of Ezra.

Wednesday, from Woden, another of their idols.

The fifth day of the week was called Thursday, from their idol Thor.

The sixth day of the week was termed Friday, from Friga, an imaginary goddess by them worshipped.

The seventh day they styled Saturday, as is supposed from Saturn, or Seater, then worshipped.*

Ever since we were a people we have had a testimony against formal worship, being convinced by the precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ, the testimonies of his apostles, and our own experience, that the worship and prayers which God accepts, are such only as are produced by the influence and assistance of his Holy Spirit; we cannot therefore consistently unite with any in the observation of public fasts, feasts, and what they term holy days; or such injunctions and forms as are devised in man's will for divine worship; the dispensation to which outward observa-

* See Verstegan and Sheringham.

tions were peculiar, having long since given place to the spiritual dispensation of the gospel, we believe the fast we are now called to, is not the bowing of the head like a bulrush for a day, but an universal and continual fasting and refraining from every thing which has a tendency to defile the soul and unfit it for becoming the temple of the Holy Ghost, according to the injunctions of Christ to his primitive disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him take up his daily cross and follow me. Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the son of man." That the primitive believers saw an end to these shadows of good things, by coming to him in whom all figures and shadows end, is evident by the words of the apostle Paul; "For Christ, said he, is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. x. 4. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which

was established upon better promises." Heb. viii. 6. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." Col. ii. 16, 17. And the same apostle thus expostulated with some who it appears had fallen from the true faith in these respects, "But now after that ye have known God, how turn ye again to the beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage. Ye observe days and months, and times and years: I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Gal. iv. 9, 10, 11.

We are also religiously restrained from shutting up our doors, windows and shops upon such days as are appointed to desire a blessing upon, and success to the arms of the kingdom or commonwealth under which we live; nor can we give thanks or illuminate the windows of our houses for victories obtained by the effusion of blood; for believing that strife and contention, with every thing

built thereon, shall come to an end, the continuance of those occasions must, to the truly christian mind, be cause of deep mourning.

DEFAMATION AND DETRACTION.

FRIENDS are exhorted to maintain always a strict watch over themselves and each other against the subtle and mischievous spirit of tale-bearing and detraction, the manifest tendency of which is to lay waste the unity of the body, by sowing the seeds of disesteem, strife and discord among brethren and neighbours; as well as to unfit those who either propagate or listen to evil reports, for being of that service to the persons reflected upon, which they might be if the order prescribed by our blessed Lord to his church was strictly observed, viz. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or

three witnesses every word may be established, and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

If thou hear a report to the disadvantage of a friend, be careful not to report it again, but go to the person of whom the report is, and inquire if it be true or not: if it be true, deal with him or her according to the doctrine of Christ, Matt. xviii. 16, 17; but if false, then endeavour as much as thou canst to stop such report.

The preservation of love and unity is a duty in every state of religious attainment; and did we faithfully observe the great Master's precept of doing to others as we would they should do to us, its practice would be easy. Detraction and enmity would then be destroyed in the seed, and that excellent christian charity, recommended by the apostle, prevail over all.

DISCIPLINE
AND
MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

As it consisted with the will of our heavenly Father, after he had called our primitive Friends from the various forms of religion to worship him in spirit, to lead them into the establishing and support of a christian discipline for the help and preservation of the body in a consistency of conduct, we exhort all who are concerned in the management of the discipline, that they fervently seek to be clothed with a right mind therein, that nothing may be done through rashness, strife or vain glory, but all with a single eye to the honour of truth, and the good of individuals.

The more we experience a preparation of heart for the exercise of our respective gifts, the more amply shall we evince the expres-

sion of the tongue to be seasoned with that living virtue and divine power, which proceeds from our Holy Head, and thus, in conducting the important concerns of society, we shall be enabled to example the beloved youth in a manner which will evidence to them, that neither tradition nor a mere outward education can fitly prepare them for successors in the church. Upon this subject we are the more solicitous, as we believe many who were evidently under the forming hand, have been suddenly laid hold of, and introduced into service before that preparation of heart hath been sufficiently experienced, which leads to a reliance upon divine direction, and redeems from a confidence on the natural understanding: on the other hand we believe there has in many places been a want of care in those who are acceptably active in the discipline, rightly to distinguish, and seasonably to bring into action, the talents bestowed upon some in the early stage of life; it being truly desirable, that by a just discrimination of times and seasons, and of

the qualifications bestowed, every gift may be rightly exercised, and a succession of useful members preserved in every rank in the church.

Let an inquiry be raised in the minds of all the members of the church, who have had any part of the Lord's work upon them, how they have acquitted themselves in his sight; forasmuch as a day comes on apace, in which an account of our stewardship will be required at our hands.

If this awful sense of rendering an account of our trust, and the importance of being clear from the blood of each other were enough impressed upon all minds, the right exercise of our christian discipline would be a means of our edification in righteousness and preservation from many evils of the world.

We are concerned that the management of our christian discipline be not committed to hands unclean; particularly of such who allow or connive at undue liberties in their own children or families. "If a man (said the apostle) know not how to rule his own

house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"

In order to unite us more nearly one to another as members of the same body, and to strengthen each others hands in promoting the cause of truth, it is recommended that Friends stand open to the leadings of the love of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; and when in that they feel their minds drawn to sit with any of their neighbouring monthly or quarterly meetings, that they attend thereto, and that such meetings as are so visited, receive such in the same love, and not look upon them as intruders; thus mutual help will be given and received amongst us.

Dear Friends, be patient in the exercise of your gifts and services, and take no offence at any time, because what seems to be clear to you is not presently received by others; let all things in the church be propounded with an awful reverence of him that is the head and life of it; who said "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them:" therefore

let all beware of their own spirits and keep in a gracious temper, that so they may be fitted for the service of the house of God, whose house we are if we keep upon the foundation that God hath laid; and such he will built up, and teach how to build up one another in him; and as every member must feel life in himself and all from one head, this life will not hurt itself in any, but be tender of itself in all; for by this one life of the word, ye were begotten, and by it ye are nourished and made to grow into your several services in the church of God; it is no man's learning, nor artificial acquirements; it is no man's riches, nor greatness in this world; it is no man's eloquence and natural wisdom, that makes him fit for government in the church of Christ: all his endowments must be seasoned with the heavenly salt, and his gifts pass through the fire of God's altar a sacrifice to his praise and honor, that so self being baptized into death, the gifts may be used in the power of the resurrection of the life of Jesus in him.

GAMING AND DIVERSIONS.

As our time passeth swiftly away, and our delight ought to be in the law of the Lord, it is advised that a watchful care be exercised over our youth and others in membership, to prevent their going to stage plays, horse races, music, dancing, or any such vain sports and pastimes; and being concerned in lotteries, wagering, or other species of gaming. And as we are not only accountable for our substance, but also for our time, let them be employed in fulfilling our respective religious and social duties, remembering the injunction, "Work while it is called to-day, for the night cometh wherein no man can work."

All parents and heads of families are exhorted to seek to be endued with the clothing of the Holy Spirit, that they may at suita-

ble seasons be enabled to raise in the minds of the youth, and those under their direction, a sense of the inexpressible comfort and delight which attends the exercise of true religion and virtue; thus they will see that the sports and diversions which are used to obtain what is falsely called pleasure, are the inventions of degenerate and corrupt minds, who being ignorant of that solid satisfaction of soul which is of an enduring nature, vainly attempt to supply the want of it by those pleasures which end in anxiety and sorrow.

MARRIAGE.

MARRIAGE being an ordinance of God, he alone can rightly join man and woman therein; neither priest or magistrate are requisite to its accomplishment; and as we shall not find in all the Scripture that the priest had any part therein further than as a witness among others that were present, we cannot countenance any in the exercise of a function which we believe is designed merely to advance the interest and profits of a certain class of men; and which is no part of the office of a gospel minister.

As marriage is an engagement of great importance to our present peace and future well-being, it is much desired that it may not be entered upon inconsiderately, or on motives evidently inconsistent with that unerring wisdom by which it was primarily ordained:

which was, for the mutual assistance and comfort of the parties in spirituals and temporals; and that their offspring may be educated in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and for the discharge of their duty in their various allotments in the world.

Marriage implies union as well in spiritual as temporal concerns. Whilst the parties differ in religion they stand disunited in the main point, even that which should increase and confirm their mutual happiness, and render them meet-helps and blessings to each other. Where it is otherwise, the reciprocal obligation into which they have entered becomes their burden: whatever felicity they might have flattered themselves with in the beginning, they have found themselves disappointed of, by the daily uneasiness accompanying their minds and imbittering their enjoyments.

The perplexed situation of the offspring of such alliances is also to be lamented; attached by nature to both parents, their confusion often renders them unfixed in princi-

ple and unsettled in practice; or if, as is usual, the sons attach themselves to the father and the daughters to the mother, brothers and sisters are trained up in lines of conduct diverse from, and in some instances opposite to each other; thus differing in principle, they are frequently divided in affection, and though so nearly related, are sometimes at the greatest distance from that love and harmony which ought continually to subsist between them.

To prevent falling into these disagreeable and disorderly engagements, it is requisite to beware of the paths that lead to them—the sordid interests and ensnaring friendships of the world—the contaminating pleasures and idle pastimes of earthly minds; also the various solicitations and incentives of festivity and dissipation. Let our dear youth likewise avoid the too frequent and too familiar converse with those from whom may arise a danger of entanglement, by their alluring the passions and drawing the affections after them.

All young or unmarried people in membership with us are advised, previously to their making any procedure in order to marriage, seriously and humbly to wait upon the Lord for his counsel and direction in this very important concern; and when favoured with satisfactory clearness therein, early to acquaint their parents or guardians with their intentions, and wait for their consent: thus preservation from the dangerous bias of forward, brittle and uncertain affections, would be experienced to the real benefit of the parties and the comfort of their friends.

And it is earnestly recommended to Friends that they tenderly watch over the youth, and extend seasonable caution and admonition on such occasions.

Let such of our members be admonished who keep company in order for marriage with persons not of our society, or with any bound servants or apprentices, without the leave of their masters or mistresses; or who are present themselves or consent to their

children being present at marriages of those not in membership, which are accomplished by the assistance of a priest.

Improper connections in marriage being often for want of due care in parents, and those who have the important charge of educating the youth, early to admonish and instruct them in the principles of truth, and impress their minds with the duty of religiously observing them: where there is apparent danger of the affections of any such being improperly entangled, and the care of those who have the oversight of them, appears not sufficient to prevent their taking imprudent steps in the accomplishment of marriage, they should early apply for the help of their friends.

That no occasion may be given for reproaching the religious profession we are making, it is recommended that when any Friends dwelling in the same house have views of a connection in marriage with each other, and proposals on that account have been made and received, that they no longer

reside together until the marriage is accomplished. And it is tenderly desired, that such of our members who are widowers or widows, would cautiously guard against making or encouraging proposals on account of marriage so early after the decease of wife or husband, as to manifest a disregard to the memory of the deceased, and want of weighty example becoming our religious profession.

The too ready acceptance of papers of acknowledgment from such persons who accomplish their marriages out of the order of the society, being of injurious consequence and a cause of much concern and exercise, it is earnestly recommended to monthly meetings, that they be careful speedily to proceed to put the rules of our discipline in practice against such offenders: and when papers of acknowledgment and condemnation are offered, such meetings should be well assured that they proceed from a true ground of sincerity and conviction in the party, manifested by a consistency in life and conversation.

And it is advised, that in the accomplish-

ment of marriage, all Friends, particularly those in affluent circumstances, be careful to set a becoming and encouraging example of moderation, that all unnecessarily expensive entertainments and large companies be avoided, and an especial guard maintained against inviting such as guests who are unlikely to conform to the order of our religious society; and that all the marriages amongst us be accomplished decently, gravely and weightily: that the parties themselves, their parents and other friends present, do take care that no occasion of offence or reproach be given, by any intemperate or immoderate eating or drinking, or by any unseemly or rude discourse or actions; but that all behave with such sobriety as becomes a people fearing God.

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP.

We exhort all to a christian exercise and zeal in the performance of worship to Almighty God; and as we are not capable in our own strength to perform this great duty, we recommend to a diligent waiting in true silence and retirement of mind, for the renewed sense of the inward power and virtue of his Spirit, whereby we shall be qualified to worship him in an acceptable manner.

Let our faithfulness and sincerity herein appear, by the humility, meekness and circumspection of our lives and conversation, adorning the doctrines and principles of truth, as they were declared by Christ and his apostles; those who have been preserved in faithfulness therein, having to testify from living experience, that it hath been very profitable; and therefore cannot be easy without en-

couraging and putting forward their children, apprentices and servants to this religious duty, as well as to other behaviour suitable thereunto.

And it is advised, that such of our members as come late to meetings, or fall asleep when there, or are restless, or do not stay in the meeting, but go forth unnecessarily, or otherwise demean themselves unbecoming our holy profession on those solemn occasions, be tenderly and seasonably admonished.

Let not the smallness of numbers discourage you from constantly attending our religious meetings, inasmuch as the words of Christ remain unchangeably true and steadfast; "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." And with respect to temporal concerns, there are many witnesses to the verifying of his gracious promise, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." But when remissness and neglect of

attending meetings for worship have prevailed, it hath been often an inlet to such undue liberties as truth and its guidance do not admit of.

When gathered in our religious assemblies, let us be truly concerned to watch against every thought and imagination which have the least tendency to divert the mind from simplicity of desire after the Father of spirits, and Fountain of all good; thus retiring to the divine and heavenly gift, it will minister to every state and condition though you may have no outward teaching; and will preserve in humble waiting, till it be a proper time to break up your meetings with that decency and solemnity which should attend our minds in such service. O that the weightiness of our spirits, and the gravity of our deportment in religious meetings, may be such as to excite an awful sensation in observers! and that at the conclusion, we may avoid trivial or unnecessary conversation: our conduct as well as countenances bespeaking that we had been with Jesus.

They who are obedient to the universal injunction of our Saviour, "Watch," are prepared for the due fulfilling of every duty; and eminently so for that most essential one of worship.

How many feel themselves languid, when assembled for this solemn purpose, for want of a previous preparation of heart! The mind crowded with thoughts on outward things, or freely conversing on them when we approach the place for public worship, and resuming them with avidity on our return, we are not likely to fill up the interval to profit; and to such, their meeting together may prove a form, as empty as any of those, out of which we believe truth called our forefathers, and still calls us.

Dear Friends, keep all your meetings in the authority, wisdom and power of truth, and the unity of the blessed Spirit; and the God of peace be with you.

MODERATION AND TEMPERANCE.

It is affectionately recommended, that Friends be careful to use moderation on account of marriages, births, burials, and on all other occasions; conformably to the pure truth, which leads into great circumspection and would preserve from giving any just cause of offence or stumbling to any: on the other hand a conduct and practice assimilated to the maxims and fashions of the world, not only evinces our own individual unfaithfulness to the salutary restrictions of the principle we make profession of, but is an obstruction to the progress of reformation, promotes various evils, and tends to obscure that light and lessen its precious savour which our example should be a means of diffusing among men, agreeably to the exhortation of the holy apostle, "Let your moderation be known

unto all men, the Lord is at hand." Phil. iv. 5. And as the all-seeing eye beholds our thoughts, and views us in all our ways and actions, what manner of men ought we to be in all godliness of life, and sobriety of deportment.

Many religiously attentive minds having been long painfully burdened with observing the corrupting, debasing and ruinous effects consequent on the importation and retailing large quantities of distilled spirits, whereby the intemperate use of them is greatly aided and encouraged, to the impoverishment of many, distempering the constitutions and understandings of many more, and increasing vice and dissoluteness in the land, it is the united sense of this meeting, that well concerned Friends in all quarters be earnestly excited to suffer the affecting importance of this mighty evil, religiously to impress their minds, and animate them with lively concern to exert honest endeavours by example and loving entreaty, and to caution and dissuade all our members from being concerned in the

importation or retailing distilled spirits, or giving countenance thereto, and from using them in the time of harvest or otherwise.—And where it is apprehended there may be occasion of using any as medicine, it is earnestly desired that religious caution be observed therein.

Under the weight and pressure of the deeply interesting concern for the maintenance of our christian testimony against the trading in and use of distilled spirituous liquors, a travail being felt that a gradual and steady advancement thereof may in no respect be impeded, quarterly and monthly meetings are afresh urged to renewed patient, persevering labour with such as are in this practice, manifesting, that if continued in by any of our members, it cannot admit of any countenance while there is a faithful adherence to the divine principle of good-will to men.

And let endeavours be used to dissuade the members of our religious society from being either owners of distilleries, or procuring their fruit to be converted into spirits.

NEGROES OR SLAVES.

UNDERSTANDING that some in membership with us, either through inadvertence, or from selfish motives, have hired slaves to assist them in their business; we desire such to consider that in so doing they promote the unrighteous traffic, and oppose our testimony against it.

Friends are also cautioned against acting as executors or administrators to estates where slaves are bequeathed; and against doing any thing whereby their bondage may be prolonged.

And we earnestly desire it may become the concern of our members generally, to use the influence they have with those who hold slaves by inheritance or otherwise, that they may be treated with moderation and kindness, and instructed as objects of the com-

mon salvation, in the principles of the christian religion; as well as in such branches of school-learning as may fit them for freedom, and to become useful members of civil society. Also that Friends in their several neighbourhoods advise and assist such of the black people as are at liberty, in the education of their children, and common worldly concerns.

OATHS.

ADVISED, that our christian testimony be faithfully maintained against the burden and imposition of oaths, according to the express command of Christ, and the injunction of the apostle James, viz. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths; but I say unto you swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne: nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black: but let your communication be, yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Matt. v. 33 to 37.

"But above all things my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea, be yea; and your nay, nay; lest you fall into condemnation." James v. 12.

Friends in all places are exhorted carefully to avoid electing or promoting their brethren to such stations in civil government as may subject them to the temptation of violating this testimony: and in the execution of instruments of writing requiring witnesses, it is recommended that Friends endeavour to procure such persons for this purpose, as will attest the same by affirmation.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

It behoves all parents and heads of families to be good examples themselves, watching over their youth for good, and early guarding them against those deviations from simplicity in speech, behaviour and apparel, by which many have been betrayed into injurious company and unsuitable connections, and some into an entire renunciation of the religious principles and profession of their fathers. That faithfulness in the discharge of this important trust is well pleasing to the Lord, remarkably appears in that gracious testimony given concerning his servant Abraham: "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do: for I know him that he will command his children and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment; that the

Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him:" which was indeed to bless both him and his offspring, and make of him a great nation.

But contrariwise was it with Eli, who, though he reproved his disorderly sons, yet not restraining them when he might have done it, they became "sons of Belial," and signal examples of divine displeasure.

Wherefore dear Friends, seeing the Lord hath been pleased in his infinite goodness to raise us up as a people to bear testimony to his truth, and against the corrupt customs and fashions of the world, let us be mindful of our calling, watchful over ourselves, and daily seeking to him for wisdom rightly to govern the inexperienced youth entrusted to our care; habituating them from their infancy to the safe and pleasant paths of simplicity and innocence, piety and virtue; and nipping in the bud every appearance of an inclination to the contrary; endeavouring, as their understandings unfold, to inform and convince them of the ground of our religious

testimonies; and often reminding them, that it was by a faithful submission to the manifestations and restrictions of truth, that our honorable predecessors were enabled to endure with patience the many persecutions and crosses they underwent, and were freed from a slavery to the evils we have mentioned; evils, which even those who are bound to them by custom, have often confessed are inconsistent with the nature and design of the christian religion, and connect with other improprieties of pernicious consequences. Thus may these tenderly beloved objects of our solicitude be engaged to walk in the footsteps of the righteous who are gone before; and preferring the Lord's cause to all things, finally partake of that rest and joy, into which we surely believe those dignified sons of the morning are now forever entered.

It is advised, that Friends, as they prize the real welfare of their children, choose such occupations for them as are consistent with our religious principles and testimonies; and that they be placed for instruction with

sober and exemplary members of the society, that, as far as in us lies, they may be preserved in a consistency of conduct and demeanour.

Our members are reminded of the propriety of keeping their families, as much as conveniently may be, unmixed; that an exemplary consistency may be maintained therein, and a corruption of manners avoided.

Friends are desired, by all the means in their power, to keep our youth duly to meetings, to dissuade all under their care from the indecent practice of straggling abroad on the first day of the week; and at all times to prevent them from mixing with crowds of rude and noisy people, which are not only interruptive of the public peace, but often productive of mischief to individuals.

Friends are exhorted to labour for a right qualification, whereby they may be enabled to improve suitable opportunities for collecting their children and families together in religious retirement, especially in the afternoon of the first day of the week, in such places

where meetings for public worship are not then held. The performance of this duty, and solidly reading the scriptures of truth and other religious books, with a pious, watchful care over the youth at other times, would greatly tend to discourage their visiting and rambling about on that day, or mixing with unprofitable company; and under the divine blessing, be a means of their preservation from many ensnaring temptations to which they are liable.

Let us who are advanced in years and experience, like wise builders lay the foundation deep, manifesting to the youth, by our uniform regard to real piety and virtue, that, looking beyond our own dissolution, we are engaged for their present and future prosperity, and are labouring in the fear of the Lord, that their minds may be so preserved from corruption, that they may understand their true interest, consider the uncertainty of temporal things, and above all have their hope and dependence settled on the blessing of the Almighty, who, though he inhabits

eternity, and dwelleth in the light, yet condescends to regard those whose hearts are contrited before him and tremble at his word: hereby the gracious design of divine Providence concerning them, would not be frustrated by our conduct or omission of duty; and we may be instrumental in preparing their minds to receive the power of truth, without which they can never be happy.

Ye parents, be solicitous to discharge your important and awful duty with scrupulous attention. It is often too late to warn the youthful mind of danger, when your own negligence or indulgence hath suffered your offspring to deviate from that path of simplicity in which you have thought yourselves bound to walk, and in which you have found peace. If you fail to suppress the early beginnings of undue liberty, how can you expect a blessing on your endeavours, when further deviations at length arouse your attention? and how, having failed to rule your own houses well, can you expect duly to take care of the church of God? There were of old those

who brought children to Christ in the days of his flesh, and now the religious parent can breathe no warmer aspiration for them, than when he spiritually commends his tender offspring to the protection of his Lord: but see Friends that you encourage no propensities in them which prevent an union with him.

PLAINNESS.

ADVISED, that all Friends, both old and young, keep out of the world's corrupt language, manners, vain and needless things and fashions, in apparel, buildings, and furniture of houses; some of which are immodest, indecent, and unbecoming. And that they avoid immoderation in the use of lawful things, which, though innocent in themselves, may thereby become hurtful; also such kinds of stuffs, colours and dress, as are calculated more to please a vain and wanton mind, than for real usefulness; and let tradesmen and others, members of our religious society, be admonished, that they be not accessary to these evils; for we ought to take up our daily cross, minding the grace of God which brings salvation, and teaches to deny all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live so-

berly, righteously and godly in this present world, that we may adorn the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things; so may we feel his blessing, and be instrumental in his hand for the good of others.

Our forefathers and the truly religious in the present day, being through the teachings of the spirit of Christ, brought to see in the first place the necessity of sincerity and uprightness of heart towards God, that this awful inward work required great watchfulness and faithful obedience to his commands, they were drawn out of the vain fashions and customs of the world, knowing from experience that a redeemed mind could have no life in them.

If our youth or others should make light of that plainness of speech, apparel and furniture which we have been led into; let them seriously examine their own hearts with due regard to the grace of God placed there; and they will find, that so far as they embrace such vanities they weaken themselves in the practice of religious duties, and expose them-

selves to further temptations, and more dangerous vices.

It is not a sufficient excuse for such deviations, to suppose that some may put on the appearance of plainness for temporal ends, and from hypocritical motives; for such as these are an abomination to God and good men, and ought no more to deter the sincere hearted from an exemplary behaviour and conduct, than a just man should be prevented from speaking truth because others when they covertly can, may be guilty of falsehood. We also tenderly advise, that Friends take heed that they use plainness of speech without respect of persons in all their converse among men; and not balk their testimony by a cowardly compliance, varying their language according to their company: a practice of very ill example, rendering those who use it contemptible, and looked upon as a kind of hypocrites even by those with whom they so comply: this seems to be cautioned against by the apostle when he advises, 1 Tim. "That the deacons be grave not double

tongued," plainly importing, that it is inconsistent with the gravity of the gospel.

When you see a libertine and wanton spirit appear in your children and servants, that lusteth after the vain customs and fashions of the world either in habit or outward adorning, and your assistance and allowance craved therein, without which it cannot get forward while they are under your government; O then look to yourselves and discharge your trust for God, and for the good of their souls, exhorting in meekness and commanding in wisdom, that so you may minister and reach to the witness, and help them over their temptations in the authority of God's power; and when they feel themselves helped and delivered, their souls will bless God for you, and you will reap the comfort of your labour.

Advised, that all Friends both male and female, be careful that their adorning be that of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price; even as the holy men and women of old professing godliness with good works, were adorned.

It is cause of grief and painful concern, in observing that many of our youth instead of attending to the gospel exhortation to be sober minded, have given way to lightness and vanity, which leading into pride and its pernicious consequences, hath manifested, that though they professed with us, they were not really of us.

O that our young women would cease from all unseemly and immodest appearance in their apparel! certainly both males and females who take such undue liberties, flee from the cross of Christ; and if they do not repent and return, they will thereby suffer great loss.

The pride of men that hath corrupted many things, refuseth the gospel simplicity and natural propriety of speech, being puffed up with a vain opinion of themselves, as if the singular number were not sufficient for them, they will have others speak to them in the plural. This corruption we are informed took place in the Roman commonwealth, when the courtiers, through flattery sought

to magnify the emperor by using the word *you*, &c. which with various titles and appellations of honour, came afterwards to be applied to private persons.

Seeing then that this form of speaking to men in the plural number, doth not accord with the language of scripture, that it proceeds from pride and is in itself untrue, our ancient Friends found a necessity upon them to testify against this corruption, by using the singular equally unto all.

It is our firm belief, that it is not lawful for christians either to give or receive titles of honour, as your holiness, your majesty, your excellency, &c. because these titles are no part of that obedience which is due to magistrates or superiors; neither doth the giving of them add to or diminish from that subjection we owe to them, which consists in obeying their just and lawful commands, not in titles and designations.

POOR.

PRACTICAL charity is supported by liberality: where liberality ceaseth, charity waxeth cold, yea so far ceaseth; where there is no contribution, there is no distribution; where one is sparing the other is also; therefore let every one nourish charity in the root, that is, keep a liberal mind, a heart that looks upon the substance that is given him, as much bestowed upon him for the support of charity, as for the support of his own body. Those that are of this mind will be careful that they do not keep back any of God's part; for in all ages he hath in a most singular manner espoused the cause of the poor, the widow and fatherless, and hath often signified by his prophets and ministers, a special charge to rich men that had this world's goods, that they should look to it that they were faithful stewards of what they possessed, and that

they be found in good works, and not suffer their hearts so to cleave to uncertain riches, as to neglect the service God had given them the things of this life for, either to give them up when called for, in a testimony for his worthy name, or to communicate of them to those that were in necessity.

Those who by sickness, lameness, age or other impotency, are brought into poverty, are your peculiar care, and objects pointed out to you to bestow your charity upon, for by them the Lord calls for it; for as the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness of it, he hath by his sovereign power commanded in every dispensation, that a part of what we enjoy from him should be thus employed. The Israelites were to leave a part of their produce for the poor; and in the time of the gospel, they were to lay by a part of what God had blessed them with for the relief of those that were in necessity, which was not confined to their own meetings only, but upon extraordinary occasions they had a regard to the whole church of Christ: and all that keep

in the guidance of the same universal spirit, will make it their business to be found in the same practice of charity and good works; they that forget not this christian duty, will find out the poor's part in the corners and gleanings of the profits of their trades and merchandisings, as well as the Israelite of old did in the corners and gleanings of his field; and in the distribution of it will have a regard to comfort the bowels of such, who by the divine providence of God, are put out of a capacity of enjoying those outward comforts of health, strength and plenty which others enjoy: for while they are partakers of the same faith, and walk in the way of righteousness with you, submitting themselves patiently to the dispensation of God's providence towards them, they are of your household and under your care, both to visit and relieve as members of one body, of which Christ Jesus is head: and he that giveth to such poor, lendeth to the Lord, and he will repay it.

But there is another sort of poor, who make

themselves poor through their sloth and carelessness, and sometimes by their wilfulness, being heady and high-minded, and taking things in hand that are more than they can manage, and make a flourish for a season, and then through their own neglect are plunged down into great poverty; these are a sort that the primitive churches began to be troubled with in the early days of the gospel: the apostle took notice of some that would not work at all, and sharply reproved them, saying "they that would not work should not eat;" and these are commonly busy bodies, and meddlers with others' matters, while they neglect their own; and run into a worse way than the unbelievers while they profess to be believers, yet do not take care for those of their own household. Such should have admonition and reproof, labouring to convince them of their sloth and negligence, and if they submit to your reproof, and are willing to amend, then care ought to be taken to help them into a way and means to support themselves; and sometimes by a little help in this

kind, some have been reclaimed from the snares of their soul's enemy: but if they will not receive your wholesome counsel and admonition, Friends will be clear of such in the sight of God; for it is unreasonable in them to expect you should feed them that will not be advised by you, because they break the obligation of society by their disorderly walking; for our communion doth not stand only in frequenting meetings, and hearing truth preached, but in answering the blessed principle of truth in life and conversation, wherein both the rich and the poor have fellowship one with another.

REMOVALS.

FRIENDS are advised to be very cautious in changing their places of residence: it having been observed that the dissolving of old and the forming of new connections, have in many instances been attended with effects prejudicial to a growth in the truth and the service thereof, both in the heads and younger branches of families. We therefore earnestly recommend to all, that on these occasions an humble resigned attention be paid to the pointings of divine wisdom; and that before any determine to change their places of abode, they consult with their experienced fellow-members.

SCHOOLS.

As the right education of children, and the nurture of youth, is of very great consequence to them, and to the succeeding generations, we pressingly exhort all parents and heads of families, to procure such useful learning for their children, as their abilities will admit; and to encourage them as well by example as precept, to the frequent reading of the Holy Scriptures; that they and the tutors under whom they are placed, carefully guard them from reading pernicious publications; and begin early to instil into their tender minds the principles of truth, and instruct them in the nature and necessity of being born from above, without which our Lord declared, no man shall see the kingdom of God: and in order hereunto, that they labour to bring them acquainted with the holy seed

which is sown by the divine hand in every heart for that gracious end; that they may, through the Lord's blessing upon such pious endeavours, be induced to place their affections upon it; and cleaving thereto in faithful obedience, come to experience it to be unto them, Christ within, the hope of glory.

It is the renewed concern of this meeting, to recommend a care for the offspring of parents whose income or earnings are so small as to render them incapable of giving their children a suitable and guarded education; and as some of our members may incautiously permit their offspring to suffer this great loss, rather than apply for assistance from their monthly meetings, it is recommended to Friends in every monthly meeting to seek out such of their members as may be thus straitened, and administer to their help; and it is desired that such will receive the salutary aid with a willing mind, and thankfulness to the great Author of all good.

As the want of suitably qualified persons amongst Friends for teachers of schools, is

the occasion of serious disadvantage to the society in many places, as thereby well disposed Friends are deprived of opportunities for educating their children in a manner consistent with a religious concern for their welfare; we desire Friends would attend to this important point in their monthly meetings, and assist young men and women of low circumstances, whose capacities and conduct may be suitable for that occupation, with the means requisite to obtain the proper qualifications; and when so qualified, afford them the necessary encouragement for their support.

Some in membership with us having placed their children at colleges and other seminaries, out of our religious society, in order to give them what is termed a polished education; this meeting, viewing the youth of both sexes thus situated, as very liable to have their minds imbued with sentiments and principles which strengthen them in vain desires after exaltation and grandeur, and often lead them from the salutary restraints incul-

cated by our religious profession, desires that tender caution and counsel be extended to such parents and others, who may be in danger of erring in this way.

SCRIPTURES.

INASMUCH as the Scriptures of truth are the external means of conveying and preserving to us an account of the things most surely believed, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh, and the fulfilling of the prophecies relating thereto; we recommend to all Friends, especially heads of families, that they would, both by example and advice, impress on the minds of the youth, a due esteem of those excellent writings, advise them to a frequent reading and meditating therein, and at seasons when qualified therefor, give them to understand, that the same good experience of the work of sanctification, through the operation of the Spirit of God, which the Scriptures plentifully bear testimony to, is to be witnessed by believers in all generations, as well as by those in the

first ages of christianity; and on those occasions it may be useful to impart to them some account of your own experience. This, under the divine blessing, may be a means of leading their minds into a firm belief of the christian doctrine in general, and in particular, the necessity of the aid of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men; which as they are concerned to feel after, and abide under its teachings, they may reap the benefit thereof to their own peace and everlasting happiness, which is infinitely preferable to all other considerations.

SUFFERINGS.

We entreat that all who suffer for demands inconsistent with the principles of truth, may demonstrate by their whole conduct and conversation, that they really suffer for conscience sake; and keep close to the guidance of that good Spirit which will preserve in meekness and quiet resignation under every trial.

For if resentment should arise against those whom we may look upon as the instruments of our suffering, it will deprive us of the reward of faithfulness, give just occasion of offence, and bring dishonour to the cause of truth. Cavilling, or casting reflections upon any because of our sufferings, do not become the servants of Christ, whose holy example and footsteps we ought in all things faithfully to follow.

TRADE.

It being evident, that where the manifestations and restraints of the Spirit of truth are duly prized and regarded, it leads out of a bondage to the spirit of this world, and preserves the minds of its followers from many fettering and disqualifying entanglements; and contrariwise, that an inordinate love and pursuit of worldly riches often betrays those who are captivated by them, into many difficulties and dangers, to the great obstruction of the work of truth in the heart: we affectionately desire that the counsel and gracious promise of our blessed Redeemer to his followers may be borne in remembrance by us; "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

This meeting being earnestly concerned that the service of our religious society may not be obstructed, or its reputation dishonored by any imprudence of its members in their worldly engagements, recommends to all, that they be careful not to venture upon such business as they do not well understand, nor to launch out in trade beyond their abilities, and at the risk of others; especially on the credit which may be derived from a profession of the truth; but that they bound their engagements by their means; and when they enter into contracts or give their words, that they endeavour on all occasions strictly to fulfil them.

We particularly exhort, that none engage in such concerns as depend on the often deceptive probabilities of hazardous enterprises; but rather content themselves with such a plain and moderate way of living, as is consistent with the self-denying principle we make profession of; whereby many disappointments and grievous perplexities may be avoided, and that tranquillity of mind obtain-

ed, which is inseparable from the right enjoyment even of temporal things: and it is advised that where any among us err, or are in danger of erring in these respects, they be faithfully and timely admonished.

Our worthy ancestors having their eye directed towards an enduring inheritance, and their affections placed upon things above, sought not after greatness in this world, but passed the time of their sojourning here in fear and in great simplicity of heart, endeavouring thereby to reach the divine witness in every mind, and promote the love of truth and righteousness amongst mankind. In minds thus bent upon seeking a more glorious inheritance than the accumulation of worldly possessions, a concern is maintained to hold forth an example of temperance, justice and truth; but where a defection from this simplicity of heart and heavenly-mindedness hath prevailed, it hath led into the love and pursuit of this fading world, produced the fruits of pride and ambition, and occasioned many wants which our predecessors were

preserved from; to satisfy these wants, some have been excited to enter into a larger extension of trade and commerce, than they had stock and ability to conduct. Ambition and evil emulation leading into higher living and greater expenses than their income would admit, their circumstances thus becoming reduced, and being unwilling to lessen their appearance in the world, indirect means to procure a temporary support have been used, which have ended in failures and bankruptcies. A due subjection to the cross of Christ would have timely prevented this reproach brought upon individuals, and trouble on their friends; and it would also lead those under wasting and deficient circumstances, rather to give up their effects in due time, than to go on enlarging their debts by disreputable artifices, until they are stopped by unavoidable necessity, and plunged at once into ruin, sorrow and disgrace; with the painful addition of bringing their just creditors into grievous inconveniences, and some into great

danger of sinking with them in the wreck of their affairs.

The love of the world is the cause of many deviations: in some it discovers itself in a desire to be rich and great, whilst in others the worldly spirit is as clearly discerned, though the attention seems to be occupied in smaller concerns: and though we are clear that very extensive ones are often in themselves great evils, yet the trafficker in hundreds, unless the eye be kept single, may be as much buried in the earth as the trafficker in thousands.

We are not about to condemn industry, which we believe to be not only praiseworthy, but indispensable. It is the inordinate desire of the mind after worldly things, and the engrossment of the time and attention, from which we desire that all our dear friends may be redeemed.

It is recommended that Friends frequently inspect the state of their affairs, and keep their accounts so clear and accurate, that they may at any time easily know whether they live within the bounds of their circumstances

or not; and in case of death, that these may not be perplexing to survivers. And when ever any find that they have no more property left than is sufficient to discharge their just debts, it is advised, that they immediately consult with some judicious friends, and without loss of time make their circumstances known to their creditors, carefully avoiding the payment of one in preference to another, that so none may be injured, nor any reproach be incurred by mismanagement.

Advised, that when Friends accept the office of trustee or assignee, they be active in collecting the effects of the estate, and punctual and speedy in making distribution.

Advised, that Friends every where carefully avoid being any way concerned in defrauding the government of its duties; that so our ancient testimony in this respect may be inviolably maintained.

We warn our members against a pernicious practice amongst the trading part of the community, which has often issued in the

ruin of those concerned therein, viz. That of raising and circulating a kind of paper credit, with endorsements, to give it an appearance of value without an intrinsic reality; a practice which, as it appears to be inconsistent with the truth we profess, we declare our disapprobation of, and entreat every member of our society to avoid and discourage it.—We also caution all in membership with us to avoid entering into joint securities with others, under the specious plea of rendering acts of kindness; many, by so doing, having been suddenly ruined, and their innocent wives and children reduced to deplorable circumstances.

"Be not thou, said the wise man, one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee."

We affectionately desire that Friends may wait for divine counsel in all their engagements, and not suffer their minds to be hurried away by an inordinate desire of world-

ly riches; remembering the observation of the apostle in his day, and so often sorrowfully verified in ours, "that they who will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare;" and erring from the faith, "pierce themselves through with many sorrows." Even when riches to any extraordinary degree have been amassed by the successful industry of parents, how often have they proved like wings to their children, carrying them beyond the limitations of truth, into liberties repugnant to our religious testimonies; and sometimes into enterprises which have terminated in irreparable damage to their temporal affairs, if not an entire forgetfulness of the great work of the soul's salvation!

WAR.

FRIENDS are exhorted faithfully to adhere to our ancient testimony against wars and fightings, and in no way to unite with any in warlike measures, either offensive or defensive, that by the inoffensiveness of our conduct we may convincingly demonstrate ourselves to be real subjects of the Messiah's peaceful reign, and be instrumental in the promotion thereof towards its designed completion; when, according to ancient prophecy, the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea; and its inhabitants learn war no more.

We desire that all our members may beware of being induced either inadvertently or for gain, in any manner to give countenance to the destroying practice of war.

Many are the ways by which the unwary and the covetous may be caught. But brethren, look beyond the surface. Behold the depth of misery into which war plunges mankind. Then putting your trust in Him who gives understanding to the simple, and provides for the sparrows, ye may avoid the pollution which is theirs, who join hands with this desolating evil. Let all be careful not to seek or accept profit by any concern in preparations for war; for how reproachfully inconsistent would it be, to refuse an active compliance with warlike measures, and at the same time, not hesitate to enrich ourselves by the commerce and other circumstances dependent on war.

This meeting fervently recommends to the deep attention of all our members, that they be religiously guarded against approving or showing the least connivance at war, either by attending at or viewing military operations, or in any wise encouraging the unstable, deceitful spirit of party, by joining with political devices or associations, however spe-

ciously disguised under the ensnaring subtleties commonly attendant thereon; but that they sincerely labour to experience a settlement on the alone sure foundation of the pure unchangeable truth, whereby, through the prevalence of unfeigned christian love and good will to men, we may convincingly demonstrate that the kingdom we seek is not of this world: a kingdom and government whose subjects are free indeed; redeemed from those captivating lusts from whence come wars and fightings.

As we are called out of wars and fightings, so let them be as seldom as possible the subjects of our conversation; but let an holy care rest upon us, to abide in that power which gives dominion over the hopes and fears that arise from the concerns of an unstable world, which tend, as they are admitted into the mind, to lessen the trust on that Rock which is immovable.

WILLS.

KNOWING how quickly many are removed by death, it is advised that Friends who have estates to dispose of, would make their wills in time of health and strength of judgment, and therein to direct their substance as in justice and wisdom may be to their satisfaction and peace; laying aside all resentment, though occasion may have been given, lest it should go with them to the grave, remembering we all stand in need of mercy and forgiveness. Making such wills in due time can shorten no one's days, but the omission or delay thereof to a time of sickness, when the mind should not be diverted from a solemn consideration of the approaching awful period of life, has often proved very injurious to many, and been the occasion of creating animosities in families, which the seasonable

and just performance of this necessary duty might have effectually prevented.

And all Friends who may become executors or administrators, are advised to make a full, clear and perfect inventory of the estate and effects of the deceased, early after the interment, as many difficulties and disputes have arisen, and sometimes injustice been done for want of it, or by deferring it too long.

THE END.

HAVERFORD COLLEGE
3 1795 00540 9584